

# Freedom

FEBRUARY 21 1970 Vol 31 No 6

**THE SPRINGBOK** rugby players have returned home—the cricketers are due here in ten weeks' time. The next two months should be a 'close season' in the vigorous and vocal art of demonstrating, but the demonstrators have shown how sustained their campaign is, turning their attentions to county grounds long before the first pre-season net practice. The county clubs who play host to the Springboks in May had some night visitors—many of them zealous Young Liberals (Lord Byers and Jeremiah Thorpe among others in the senior Party had a fit when reading the news), an avant-garde platoon taking a bit of practice themselves with paint, brushes and weed-killer.

MCC for their part are determined the South Africans should come and intend to give them all the protection they need, no matter the cost. While allowing the South African Cricket Association through the Government to dictate to them, never making any move to use its rightful authority in such matters, till one began to think that the honoured words 'the ruling body of the game' meant no more than our ties with South Africa are 'traditional', which really means accepting humiliation and ill-manners from racist guests in return for keeping up an outdated abstraction. Perhaps after all but four or five counties have gone virtually bankrupt in paying out protection money, MCC will be satisfied. At the same time Jack Cheatham and Arthur Coy representing the SACA have flown over for very secret talks (indeed journalists didn't even know which plane they'd come on) with officials at Lord's. The latter have probably played down the extent of the opposition to the visit, either on moral or financial grounds.

MCC, while being dictated to by the SACA, is using the remnants of its tarnished authority in combating militant opposition on its own doorstep with advance orders for police dogs and barbed wire, particularly at Headquarters and the other four test venues. Stringent security measures, unheard of before at a cricket match, will probably be in operation at every ground, though

## Cell-Out

**THE TRIAL OF** the six Fulham Squatters at the Old Bailey on charges of conspiracy to cause actual bodily harm, resist the sheriff, and on charges of assaulting police and theft of a fridge (£7 value) was scheduled for February 9, two weeks after the last four of us were released on bail. However, the trial was postponed (Ian Purdie's case taking longer than expected), and was put off until Tuesday instead.

At 2 o'clock we were informed that we were on because the jury had gone out to decide on Purdie's case. The prosecution began their case, and of course tried to make out that we were the same as the 144 Piccadilly lot. After some time, one of the jurors wrote a note to the judge saying he didn't feel he could try the case fairly because of strong feelings on the subject. Whether in favour or against was not said but it was learnt afterwards he was an estate agent who felt the Government was unfair to property owners.

The Recorder (Aravold) then had to discharge him, a new juror was found, and the swearing in of the whole jury was gone through again, and of course the prosecution had to start his speech again.

After some of his peroration the

there is talk of cancelling fixtures due to be played on the more open grounds, vulnerable to attack and occupation, and transferring them to where the match can be played with minimal interruption. This though seems an unwise move on the part of authority; the South Africans will feel this kind of extreme measure rather keenly, even if the weather, not demonstrations become the only thing they have to contend with.

Approaching Lord's will be the refreshing sight of barbed wire. This will be followed by a virtual security check at the gate or turnstile, after which the dazed spectator will be herded into a compound on one side of the ground, perhaps not free to move except to bars, food stalls and lavatories within that 'zone'. Since this sort of control would be a good deal worse than anybody has thought up for football, only the keenest supporter of this tour would suffer this situation of watching cricket in a state of siege throughout the season gladly. Others will go because it's 'news' but are unlikely to be converted to cricket under such unnatural playing conditions.

Perhaps the cares of the world have finally caught up with cricket, previously so immune and inviolate. Cricket tours, no less than business must show a profit to justify the tour itself. The profit the seventeen first-class counties expect to make in good weather will disappear in protection, not just for the eighteen hours' duration of the match, but probably for a week at a stretch as members of the Stop-the-70s Tour concentrate on each ground. The police, numerous enough to tackle angry farmers and teachers, aren't too keen on the tour taking place either because of the fear of understrength forces, and it was because of this they made an appeal to the Home Secretary, who said it was up to MCC to decide on the arrange-

ments, though each ground must deploy maximum security, hence your actual barbed-wire sprouting from the walls of Lord's long before Wisden comes off the press.

The taxpayer of course bore the brunt of the cost of police duty at the rugby matches. At the start of the tour nobody really knew the number of police who'd be needed nor the total cost. All this was often decided a week ahead of the match. The demonstrations didn't lessen in intensity despite the predictable discrediting from the far right, which meant five hundred or more police on duty at Saturday matches, but of course many fewer for Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, but whichever way about it was, the rugby authorities coughed up £5,000 of a total cost of £50,000 when the tour had ended, while of course expecting the police to 'do their duty'.

Apart from the taxpayer always having been 'an easy lay', the popular idea is to make demonstrations unpopular enough to rouse the ire of the fleeced taxpayer who is already disgruntled anyway, about grants subsidizing the same demonstrating students.

The Tories have even utilised the anti-apartheid atmosphere as a lever for vote-catching. And although the promises and pledges on more urgent matters just melt away, I think the Tories could keep their word here, since bringing back 'law and order', so long as you've the police to do it, is easier to implement than actually keeping on schedule with vague housing figures. So if the police get a rise and the Tories are returned to power with 'renewed purpose', you'll know why.

The most intriguing possibility is that enthusiasts will club together and help to pay for the tour off their own collective bat in a manner of speaking. So far there have only been rumours of a private fund, though some people believe if such a fund became official, it would show the extent of the support for the South African tourists. MCC are unlikely to veto the idea so long as the money comes from somewhere, and the counties already worried about losses on the South African match will naturally be readily agreeable to having their protection costs partially or completely offset. This won't avoid the anticipated siege situation, but is nowhere as irresponsible as the

## SUPPLEMENTS AGAIN

**THE next issue of 'Freedom' will include an extra one page supplement. Although our financial position is far from good, we are nevertheless able to increase the number of pages. We also have plans for further supplements which also can be sold on their own as pamphlets. Further details of contents will be given next month.**

**Our ability to be able to publish extra pages, and special supplement pamphlets with the last issue of each month depends on your continuing financial support and a much-needed increase in sales and subscriptions.**

EDITORS.

# CRICKET UNDER SIEGE

rugby authorities' attitude over helping to pay for the Springboks' tour. This way the cricket tour may splutter on into a tense August instead of being discontinued about July.

Can the county cricketers do anything to help? Nobody can be sure when the time comes, but Wilf Woller's champion county Glamorgan may be without three coloured overseas players when the South Africans come to Swansea at the end of July. But the club employs the player and woe betide a clash of principles with the committee.

The white population of South Africa, with the help of fine pitches and first-class coaching, has produced several players of world class in recent years. The present team are so good, the Australian tourists are playing like novices in test matches, so of course how can the non-white cricketer even hope to 'understudy' the established men on tour when reared on inferior facilities? The West Indian Sobers, by general consent the most remarkable cricketer now playing, learnt his cricket in a rudimentary way on rough ground, but once spotted he was encouraged, whereas the coloured player in South Africa knows his ambitions will be unrealised unless somebody with a keen eye recommends him for a trial period with an English county team.

The privately sponsored International Cricket Cavaliers were planning to undertake a goodwill tour of South Africa after leaving Jamaica but the Vorster regime took exception when it leaked out that the princely Nawab of Pataudi was in the party, and of course he isn't a pinko, while I suppose if Sobers had gone too, it would have been 'undermining internal policy'. The South African Government also snubbed Arthur Ashe, the negro tennis player, turning down his application for a visa to play in

Cape Town and Ashe's own ambition to become the first coloured player to compete in the tournament on equal terms.

Hopefully the United States Lawn Tennis Association seem in agreement at present that South Africa should themselves be barred from membership of the International Lawn Tennis Federation as well as competing in the Davis Cup, as a reprisal for the Ashe ban. If they carry out their intentions they will have acted faster than MCC, and the South African Government will find that not all sporting bodies when insulted just sit back and take the punishment given them. MCC have gone along with the deception, perhaps even helped to promote it, that cricket matches between ourselves and South Africa is 'keeping ties between the two countries alive' and 'is building a bridge in sport'. The trouble with MCC is that, having seen the bridge collapse, they still believe they can reach the other bank safely without it.

RON PEARL.

P.S.—Half a victory already, long before the first ball bowled! The Cricket Council, a body comprised of the Test and Counties Cricket Board, in a long meeting at Headquarters on February 12, predictably opted for half a tour rather than no tour at all. Matches have been cut from twenty-eight to twelve, and only eight grounds will be used, and the tour will not last more than two months. To add further to an unnatural situation, artificial pitches will be resorted to if any damage is done to the original pitch. The rearranged fixtures have already been made and 'zone' matches are among them. Also rugby clubs who've paid less than their share of police costs of the Springboks' tour have been asked by police authorities for £10,000 odd to help offset a total bill of around £63,000.

R.P.

## Trial of the Eight

**MICHAEL ROBINSON,** Andy Langford, Gabriel Elmy, Denise Halloran, Steve Mullins, Michael McKierney, Carol Worrel, John Callaghan. These eight are on trial at Lewes Assizes, near Brighton, throughout this week. They are charged with a variety of things—resisting the sheriff, conspiracy to forcibly enter, holding an unlawful assembly, and assault. All the charges have arisen from the police bust at Endell Street School, which was occupied by the London Street Commune last September.

### WHY THESE EIGHT?

Everyone inside the building when the fuzz broke in on September 25 was arrested and charged with resisting the sheriff and his not so merry men. Then the charges were dropped on all but these eight. And not only were the charges pressed against them, but a whole series of additional charges were trumped up especially for their benefit. Clearly they have been singled out as 'ringleaders'. It is even clearer to us that 'scapegoat' would be a better term.

On what principle have these 'chosen few' been selected? On the totally arbitrary and authoritarian principle that for every action there must be leaders, and if there appear to be none, then they must be invented. The authorities seem incapable of understanding that people

can organise themselves into a community, can take collective action to defend collective interests without producing a rigid hierarchy, or a power elite. The Endell Street Commune was run democratically, through nightly mass meetings where all decisions were taken, on policy, as well as the day-to-day running of the building. Some people were asked by the meeting to take on certain responsibilities, e.g. food, cooking, public relations, because they were good at that thing.

It is because the authorities can't understand all this that they have picked the eight, more or less out of a hat. Two of the defendants had only been in Endell Street just over 24 hours before they were arrested. Another was not even living at the Commune, but merely came in to advise on public relations. How can they possibly be called 'ring-leader'? And as for the other five, their only crime seems to have been that they are more articulate, or more forceful personalities than some.

As for the evidence of a 'leadership', we have to thank the press. The press, who were never allowed inside the buildings, and who had to invent 'charismatic' leaders, for their sensational personal angle stories. While the press have

Continued on page 2

# DYE AT ICI

**DEATH IN SMALL DOSES** could well be the pay-off for the workers of ICI Blackley, where safety is shelved for the sake of bonuses and profits. What follows is the disturbing inside account of a young ICI worker, who claims foremen all but force their men to risk life and limb in order to step up production.

This is the terrible tale of some of the goings-on at ICI; reckoned to be 'one of our great polluters and propagandists'. Here we have an overtime ban, a pay rise in the pipeline, a manoeuvring management of fly-boys, and the useless union of General & Municipal Workers.

**ALL THIS AND MORE BESIDES IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE OF THE 'NORTH WEST WORKER'.**

## THE GENEROUS GIANT

**CAN IT BE!** Yes! Yes! It is the one and only giant ICI, 'the pathfinders'; leaders in industrial relations; generous to their employees. Or so they like to think, but down on one of their chemical plants things are stirring.

At Blackley Works (Dyestuffs Division) the plant men, the fitters, and the electricians are beginning to recover from ICI's last blow and are drifting back into the unions. Since the strike, almost four years ago, ICI Blackley have been trying indoctrination campaigns, and are so paternalistic that they even encourage the unions to look to the company for leadership.

Their finest effort to date, the safety campaign, is a farce. Because of the bonus scheme in operation we are forced to take risks on the job to produce more and get a better wage.

As a result any accidents are our own fault. Anyone complaining at safety meetings, organised once a month by the company, is branded as a trouble-maker by the foremen and accused of thinking of himself, not his workmates.

## OVERTIME BAN

The fitters and electricians have been operating an overtime ban; their aims are a fair day's pay for a fair day's work,

something which does not exist in the works at the moment. It is a pity that the plant operators and day men in the General & Municipal Workers' Union didn't join in in sympathy. But then, they can't afford to lose overtime, without it their take-home pay would be down to well nigh the poverty level.

Previous inter-union bickering at high levels has also contributed to the split between the men. A fact which can only make the management laugh with joy.

Shop stewards are willing to help the men, but are powerless over such matters as wage negotiations because these can only be settled by national agreements, which means going through National Executives, totally cut off from the needs and conditions of the men at the bottom who pay them.

The last pay rise for plant operators was around 18 months ago, a miserable 5%. The next one will come with the introduction of a new scheme, the Weekly Staff Agreement, of which remarkably little is known in fact, and this will not be for at least 6 months. Two years without a pay rise and the cost of living has risen over 14%.

## PROFIT SHARING FIDDLE

The profit sharing scheme is yet another farce: we get a certain number of shares, depending how much money we earn over a year. These shares are bought on the market in February. In June we are given a slip showing the bonus allowed to us minus tax, and the number of shares bought at February's price with our money.

Around September we can sell our shares. Apart from the fact that we have to pay the stockbrokers twice to get cash in hand, and are not given a choice about what we do with our annual bonus, it is pointed out that the market price of the shares is lower when most people sell than when the shares are bought. Such is the nature of the market that the ICI share prices boom in February and slump in September.

**Cell-Out**  
Continued from page 1

plained in the negative. On the second day of our trial, three prosecution witnesses were put on the stand before lunch. These were the sheriff's officer, a police inspector, and one of our ex-homeless, Mrs. Joan Foster. The first two gave incorrect and contradictory evidence, quite possibly mistaken, but none of it was very bad. Then came Joan, who had been pressured into being a prosecution witness. She was magnificent. In the face of continuous attempts by the prosecutor to determine damning answers by skilful questioning, she persisted in answering with the whole truth, despite his gentle attempts to stop her. (He had to be gentle, for she was his own witness.) It was a moving performance, as the *cliche* says. At the end of it, one of us remarked, 'I like that witness for the defence.' He had a point.

We later heard that Detective-Sergeant Bormann, of Fulham, approached her afterwards and remonstrated with her about her evidence, saying that it had been a waste of time and money bringing her to court. She replied that he surely didn't expect her to lie, after swearing on the Bible.

Shortly after this, the court adjourned for lunch, and we were taken downstairs to a large cell, where we were given a typical prison meal, except that prison 'tea' doesn't have sugar in it, and isn't necessarily cold. We stayed there until 2.15 p.m. when we were brought back to the stairs which lead up into the dock. We were waiting there for about half an hour, though most of the court officials were in the court, and my suspicions of the pending deal were confirmed by the barristers coming down through the dock to have a word with us.

They took us each away separately, and what they told each of us was basically the same. The prosecution were now also willing to drop the assault charges, and what they now wanted was that everyone would plead 'guilty' to conspiracy to resist the sheriff and that the three charged with theft would plead 'guilty' to that.

We each thought this over deeply, discussed it with our barristers, and then amongst ourselves. It was obvious that the police were anxious to make a deal, which meant that they directly, or the 'Crown', had something to lose in some things being publicized during the trial or perhaps something to lose in us being sent to prison. Therefore, one would perhaps think, that we should refuse to accept the deal. Not necessarily. The fact was that I believe they overestimated the extent of the agitation which would come as a result of our imprisonment and that we could afford imprisonment more than they could afford the publicity.

We had been in prison for four months on remand, the longest in recent history for 'social action' (as opposed to political), and we had been on hunger strike for a week in October and one of us for 12 days before Xmas, and apart from some articles in FREEDOM and a circle of very welcome visitors, we just didn't exist as far as the anarchists in England were concerned. The LSE boys were in for a week and there was a demonstration outside the prison. While we conferred amongst ourselves, it became obvious that only one of the six of us was definitely against any deal, but he said he would abide by the decision of the rest. In the end, we decided to accept and we pleaded guilty to conspiracy to resist the sheriff and those of us concerned pleaded guilty to 'theft' and then we

LONDON STREET COMMUNE  
LEGAL DEFENCE GROUP.

## LATER

Two of the squatters were sentenced to nine months each. One was given 12 months' suspended sentence, one nine months' suspended. One three months' detention, one fined £20 and one sentenced to three months' detention in his absence—he had in fact 'gone missing' but he was detained by London police who had lost track of him and in any case he had served well over three months in Ashford remand centre.

Mr. Justice Seaton, who will be remembered from South London sessions, presided. We welcomed his retirement but had not expected he was still strutting on circuit. He has not lost his usual touch.

J.R.

## Cell-Out

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had to put up with the hypocritical and smarmy shit from the judge who said he hoped 'we would not lose our idealism, but would grow out of our arrogance, which made us think we were the only ones who cared about the homeless'.

This was the hardest bit to take so far, and I nearly lost control of myself a few times. Ken Hams, Ray Tuckwell, and Diarmuid Breanach ('Buzz') were given six months' imprisonment suspended for two years, and Roger Davies, Dave Griffiths and Michael Ali ('Zack') were given six months suspended for 18 months.

Many people are saying that we shouldn't have made a deal. That we should have gone to prison. Going to prison is a risk all activists take and if action is a strong social resistance to the forces of the State then imprisonment at some time is a certainty. But after the action, when one has a choice of going or not going to prison, then one must weigh up the pros and cons. If going to prison will be made use of, for protests and agitation, then it can be quite valuable to go to prison. If, however all will be quiet outside or nearly so, then there is no point in doing it.

We did sell out, solely by making any deal with the police, but we sold out no movement and no people; we sold out one of our own personal principles. A few of us have spent over a year between squatting and prison with precious little help for most of that time and practically none for the last few months of the squat. We tried to keep the ball rolling after Ilford, so that there would be a focal point still in existence for a real struggle but we waited in vain.

There is a sort of truth in the saying that 'He who pays the piper calls the tune', and you who paid us nothing, or threw us a penny or two, cannot expect us to play your tunes for you. If I had thought that there would be the agitation deserved if I went to prison (after all, we would have been the first social-activists in years to go inside), then I would have done it, with a smile even. But I fear that you would have done nothing.

So, comrades, you sold us out long ago, as well as the struggle; don't be surprised if we do a little selling out of our own now. After all, we are sort of human.

'Buzz'.

## Trial of the Eight

Continued from page 1

a perfect right to indulge their private fantasies to whip up public hysteria, when these same fantasies are used as the basis of legal proceedings, the victims have also a right to protest.

## SO WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED?

So what actually happened on the night of the bust? Before the Sheriff of London and his riot squaddies arrived, anything which could conceivably be called an offensive weapon was handed over to the police. And when they got into the building they met only the most passive kind of resistance: people locked themselves in their rooms, sat down, etc. But despite this, two of the present defendants, and quite a number of others, were openly assaulted. One girl was put between two rows of fuzz and made to run the gauntlet of kicks, fists, and jeers, until she collapsed. The police went round the building systematically smashing it up—guitars were smashed, sleeping bags and mattresses ripped open, tables overturned. And then the press were called in to inspect this 'instant squalor' we had been living in. What they forgot was that only 24 hours before a Health Inspector had toured the building, and had passed it as 'perfectly all right, and in fact greatly improved'.

When kids behave like this they are

called 'thugs' or 'hooligans' and sent to a detention centre for a short sharp shock. When the police behave like this, it is called 'defending law and order' and they are praised for their 'restraint'. Perhaps they also need a short sharp shock.

## VISITORS TURNED AWAY

After the bust was over 64 kids were remanded in custody, most to Ashford. During the next two weeks, repeated attempts were made by members of the Commune, friends and relatives, to visit those in Ashford. Despite the fact they were unconvicted, and entitled to a visit every day, anyone who looked remotely like a 'hippy', including one solicitor's clerk, was turned away. It was only after a demonstration outside the gates, and concerted pressure on the Home Office, from the NCCL, the Howard League, and a few MPs, that we were finally allowed to visit our friends.

## WHY LEWES?

It might seem strange that this case should be heard in a sleepy country town like Lewes and not in London. The official reason is that the Sheriff of London empanels the juries in London, and therefore it would not be a fair trial. What appears to be a concern for justice, however, turns out to be its opposite—a rather neat way of tilting the scales of justice even more than usual in favour of the prosecution: the social composition of a London jury on the whole reflects the broad spectrum of public

opinion from the most reactionary to the most liberal. The social composition of a jury in a place like Lewes represents only one end of the spectrum—the most conservative, property-conscious and politically regressive segment of the population. In other words the police stand a 200% better chance of getting a conviction at Lewes than they would in London. But for all that we are not going to prejudge the issue. We will let the events of this week take their course. But we will be following them, and we will not stand by and let our friends be sent down to preserve the amour propre of a violent and sick society.

LONDON STREET COMMUNE  
LEGAL DEFENCE GROUP.

## LATER

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J.R.

## LETTER Students for a Democratic Society

Dear Comrades,  
I am writing to ask if you could put me in touch with anarchist/new left high school students who would be interested in corresponding with Australian comrades. Some of my friends and I are eager to exchange ideas and

## 'NO MAN IS GOOD ENOUGH TO BE ANOTHER MAN'S MASTER'

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discuss political situations ('political' in the broadest sense) in Britain and Australia, especially with regard to high school groups, and their role in the revolutionary movement.

I myself am a member of Melbourne chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, a new left organization. SDS is the largest student movement in our country, and it is SDS that initiated and maintains the anti-Vietnam war and anti-conscription campaign here. SDS has chapters on all but one or two campuses, and even on these we have a few members. Most members of SDS are university students. However, I am still at high school. Secondary Students for Democratic Action and Australians for a Democratic Society are extensions of SDS, SSDA being the secondary schools section, and ADS the non-student part of the Movement.

I hope you will be able to help me. Liaison between groups in different nations (smash the State!) will help build an international movement. Thanks. Peace to you comrades.

Fraternally,  
MELBOURNE SDS.  
(Write in c/o Freedom Press.)



All correspondence to  
Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road,  
Rotton Park, Birmingham 16

## ANARCHIST FEDERATION of BRITAIN

The AFB information office will produce an internal bulletin. Comrades interested in its production are to meet in Birmingham on the first Sunday of each month. All groups will be informed in detail. Address all letters to:

Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham, 16. Tel. 021-454 6871. Material that cannot wait for the bulletin to be sent to R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Hellington, York. The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is also available for urgent information.

Groups should send latest addresses to Birmingham. New inquirers should

write direct to them or to the AFB information office in Birmingham.

## AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

There are now anarchist groups in almost every part of the country. To find your nearest group write to:

North West Federation: John Walker, 92 Clyde Road, Manchester, 20.  
Cornwall: A. Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell. (M. Ma. B.)  
Essex & E. Herts.: P. Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, FL.)  
Surrey: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom.  
Sussex: E. Poole, 5 Tilsbury, Findon Road, Whitehawk, Brighton.  
Yorkshire: Martin Watkins, 3 Marlborough Grove, Leeds, 2.  
Scotland: B. Lynn, 12 Ross Street, Glasgow.  
Wales: c/o P. L. Mare (address above).  
N. Ireland: c/o P. L. Mare (address above).  
University and Student Groups: c/o P. L. Mare. (Abbreviations: M—meeting; Ma—magazine; B—badges; Q—Quarterly; FL—free leaflets)

# MONEY MATTERS

**JANUARY INCOME** on sales and subscriptions: £939 10s. 0d.

As this amount is for one year, divided by twelve it shows our monthly budget as being £78 5s. 0d., and using this method will give us a progressive total as the months pass. Nevertheless, with still rising costs it is quite possible that our present expenditure of £150 per week will also rise. Expenditure for January, four copies of FREEDOM and one of Anarchy, came to £750, money which came straight out of the £939 we received. This means we have left some £200 to go towards February's costs, and then nothing at all for the remaining ten months of the year. But as long as we get the 2,000 new subs we said we needed last November, we will be able to cover ourselves.

That figure of 2,000 new subscriptions was and is no joke, and remains an absolute minimum. If you, as an individual subscriber, could get us one or more new subscriptions, we would be able to balance our books, but even that is not enough if we are to be able to produce more than four pages a week. With sufficient subscribers to make FREEDOM and Anarchy self-supporting, extra pages for FREEDOM and more pamphlets could be left to the Press Fund, and with an increased subscription list this could be a lot healthier.

A while back we ran a series of notes in FREEDOM asking comrades to write to us in order to get copies of FREEDOM to take round their local newspapers, so our distribution would be that much better. We still get odd queries for this, and would welcome more. Did you try your newspaper yet? If not, and you feel that you may be able to get us to a wider public in this way, just drop us a line and we can send you the full details of what it entails.

Monthly income ... £78 5 0  
January expenditure ... £750 0 0

Deficit to date £671 15 0

**ANARCHISM AND NATIONALISM**

**SUPERFICIALLY, ANARCHISM** is a movement of the Left, but this is not strictly so, since it implies being part of the political spectrum. Anarchists reject this, asserting that there is more in common between Right and Left political parties (like the struggle for power) than between even extreme Left political groups and the Anarchists. History has shown us that no matter how 'Left' a party is when it starts off, the achievement of power brings it round to the Right, for every government wants to maintain the status quo; wants to extend the control it has over the people, and isn't this what the Right really means?

Certain Right-wing attitudes are specifically rejected by Left-wing parties—until they become useful in the power game. 'Divide and Rule', for example, can be played with many variations, from wage differentials to religious and colour prejudice, and although nationalism is intellectually rejected by the political Left, they quite shamelessly use what are quaintly called 'National Liberation Movements' when it suits their political ambitions—and a 'Left' party in power knows very well the usefulness of nationalism and indeed patriotism as a weapon of government. Even if this were not deliberate cunning on the part of a so-called 'revolutionary government', the logic of authoritarianism leads to it.

Even allowing for soviets or workers' councils, the actual operation of state power cannot be carried out by the entire population. This demands the workers' own revolutionary party sitting at the top doing the actual governing, like suppressing all opposition in the name of the revolution and ensuring internal security by the perpetual policing of the population in its own interests to effect the immediate spotting of any deviationary elements. At the same time as this defence of the revolution is strenuously maintained, the population also has to be kept safe from external aggression, so an efficient army, navy and air force is kept at the ready, and since a workers' state is the most democratic state, a form of conscription becomes desirable to ensure that everyone does his bit.

This is really no sacrifice since the state belongs to everyone and everyone belongs to the state, but to keep the people enthusiastic for service to the state, a Leader comes forward to give every citizen someone to identify with on a personal level. In order to provide the cozy feeling of collective security, of belonging to the corporate body around him, the idea of the nation is encouraged and patriotism becomes a virtue once again—if, indeed, it ever fell out of favour.

Thus the service of the revolution achieved through authoritarian means brings the wheel full circle. The ideologies and justifications for lack of freedom—indeed for ruthless totalitarian control of the entire country—

will differ from those of the id regime, but in fact the institutions and the realities of life are exactly the same, if not worse.

For this reason anarchists do not enthuse about revolutions which are mounted in order to bring to power another set of governors. Our interpretation above has been of a so-called revolutionary change in society; how much less, then, can we enthuse about changes which do not even pretend to be revolutionary from the start?

Into this category fall the movements for national liberation which are frankly nationalistic and patriotic and call for opposition against a ruling or occupying power purely on xenophobic grounds. Although revolutionary means may be used in such a struggle, it has no more to do with social revolution as the anarchist sees it than the xenophobia of a Hitler or an Enoch Powell. Pathetic examples of this are to be found in Wales and Scotland. In fact—and here is where the situation seems to get confused—'movements for national liberation' in the trouble-spots of the world today tend to give a social-revolutionary veneer to their claims, in order to get support from the Communist states. The classic example of this is Egypt, where a successful anti-colonial struggle established a nationalistic, military regime (much like the Greek colonels!) with the aid of Russian arms and technology. By using devices like nationalisation and land reform, the veneer of socialism was applied—but, in spite of Russian 'friendship', the Communist Party is banned and Egyptian Communists are in prison. Meanwhile rabid nationalism is whipped up, patriotism by the imperial pint is kept on the boil, but nothing prospers like the state and the international arms merchants. But your authoritarian left—the Trotskyists and the CP—support the new Egyptian state!

Anarchists do not play this political game. We are not all the time jockeying for position and trying to further one or other of the power blocs that divide the world and its workers. We are truly international and oppose all those forces which divide people. Hence it is quite logical for anarchists to oppose an imperial power and the indigenous politicians who lead national resistance. For example, in condemning the Russian military occupation of Czechoslovakia, we did not thereby support the Dubcek Communist state which was in conflict with the Kosygin Communist state, in the sense that we wanted to see Dubcek remain in power. We supported the Czech people and their right to choose—even though choosing Dubcek (as the lesser evil!)—because this is a right that all people must have, and also because they were using revolutionary means (if only because there were no others) and so were learning how to do things for themselves. In the event, what opposition there was came from the people and not from Dubcek. Our attitude is the same on Vietnam (against US imperialism, but not for the Vietcong); Cuba (against Batista, not for Castro); Black Power (the answer to white racism is not black racism!); the American Revolution of 1776 (to hell with George III and the American state that followed him!); and all Arab, Jewish, Indian, African nationalisms.

The answer to Imperialism is not nationalism and reactionary regimes—it is international social revolution, destroying all national, religious, racial barriers. We have learnt from history!

THE EDITORS.



Any book not in stock, but in print can be promptly supplied. Book Tokens accepted. Please add postage & cash with order helps.

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We have a large stock of second-hand books. Please let us know what you want. This week's selection.

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**THE CURRENT POLITICAL** situation in Italy is very difficult to interpret, and I can sympathize with Jack Robinson's effort (FREEDOM, 17.1.70). If I begin by noting certain inaccuracies in his article, it is because they may contribute to a misleading overall impression.

On December 12 various bombs were set off almost simultaneously in Milan and Rome (not in Milan only) and in one of these explosions, in Milan, 16 persons were killed; six persons have been arrested and charged with participation in the bombings. The police version is that the bombings were organized by the '22nd of March' group in Rome, self-described as anarchist, of which the six were members. There are then three natural questions: Are these persons anarchists? Was the group an anarchist group? Did this group and these persons organize and carry out the bombings?

Robinson assumes that the six, and the group, are anarchist but there is a great deal of uncertainty on just this point. Even before the bombings and arrests, the group was regarded with a great deal of suspicion by the FAI, because of the fascist background of prominent individuals in the group and because of the rhetoric of terrorism in which members

**Italian Letter**

of the group indulged. Rightly or wrongly, Valpredo, who as far as the prosecution's case is concerned is the crucial individual among the arrested persons, was suspected of being a provocateur. In short, to quote a leaflet issued by one anarchist group, the members of the '22nd of March' and of a Milan counterpart 'were not only never regarded as anarchists by the comrades in Milan and Rome but on several occasions were expelled from anarchist meeting-halls because they were regarded as agents provocateurs'.

The question of the political identity of the persons arrested and the question of their innocence or responsibility in the bombings are of course separate. On the former point there does not seem to be any wholly conclusive information—some individuals may be this and some may be that, even if the suspicion of the entire Italian Left is correct that the '22nd of March' was created by fascists (or like-minded people) for use in discrediting the revolutionary Left. As to the question of innocence or responsibility, it is a reasonable guess, in view of the extreme flimsiness of the police version, and the incredibility of the police story of the 'suicide' of the Milanese anarchist Pinelli during interrogation, that the arrested persons were offered to the police in order to accomplish various objectives which have in fact been achieved: in order to provide the police with a 'solution'; in order to allow the right-wing press to attribute the bombings to anarchists; in order to provide an atmosphere in which repression of the 'extra-parliamentary Left' could be intensified; and in order to give the organizers and executors of the bombings time to cover their tracks.

To an outside observer, it is only too obvious that the Milan-Rome bombings are but a day's work in a long series of bombings through which a highly professional and well-financed organization is trying, with more than fair success, to re-create the mentality of 1921, when the middle class was persuaded by the Fascist *squadrismo* that a Strong Government was necessary to suppress 'extremism' and violence—in that case, by giving the government to the Fascist extremists. Since a Strong Government now, if it comes, will describe itself as Centrist, those who play this 'anti-extremism' game make as much profit, in fact, from a 'fascist' bomb as from an 'anarchist' bomb, for they both go to show the need to suppress extremism.

necessary to realize that Italian industrialists, like their German counterparts, maintain a tight hold on the country, and that although Italian capitalism has a liberal wing the dominant spirit is not in the least concessionary. To the Communist Party the industrialists can probably accommodate themselves, for the Party wishes to protect its existence, seems willing to wait for capitalism to bury itself, and is (not unreasonably) afraid of a coup, or even of massive military intervention from America's military bases, if the Left should become too powerful. But the extra-parliamentary Left, which means not only anarchists and syndicalists and Maoists and various kinds of Leninists but also the revolutionary students and workers of the strike of France '68, is another matter. It was largely pressures from this direction that forced the Communist Party and the labour federations to the militancy of the strikes of the 'Hot Autumn' just past. The Party and the unions were not going to repeat the mistakes of France, when for a time the spontaneous revolutionary movement got out of hand.

In the Italian strikes of '69, the workers, besides gaining wage increases, also raised, not entirely unsuccessfully, a threat to the authoritarian factory system (intimations, at least, of workers' control). The unions have also begun to make strong demands for a solution to the housing problem; desperate in the major cities because of the massive migration from the countryside brought about by industrialization; housing was the issue of the one-day general strike of November 19 in which 20 million workers and shopkeepers participated. Wage increases which are cancelled by price increases are a rearguard action. Action to control rents and to get new popular housing is a more fundamental challenge. Workers employed in industry are paying as much as half their wages for rent, often for shelter little better than the 'barracks' which are the ultimate bottom in Italian 'housing'. Action on housing hits hard at the building speculation which has been one of the major games of Italian capital in recent years. And of course it suggests the possibility of still wider interference in the profitable games of the capitalists.

If the working-class, on the whole quite articulate and quite conscious of what is wrong with the society (as compared with their American counterparts) and not at all patient (as compared with their infinitely patient English counterparts),

if this working-class is to be kept 'pacified' while the industrialists continue to make merry profits to send abroad for safe keeping, then the 'extra-parliamentary Left' has to be smashed. The prison sentences of two, three, and four years which are being handed out now to students arrested in demonstrations which the police broke up violently, and the numerous arrests of workers who were conspicuously militant during the strikes of the past year, are part of this campaign. Tolin's conviction and sentence for advocating violent revolution in *Potere Operaio* should not be set down, as Robinson sets it down, as the case of a Maoist who published some revolutionary clichés.

At the same time as the Italian industrialists of the more conservative persuasion are consulting on ways and means of perpetuating their power without yielding up any of the sweet things of industrialization, the American Government, one must believe, is keeping its eye as usual on a country where nearly half of the population votes for Communists or some kind of Socialists. This is a topic which the Italian press, even of the Left, tends to avoid, because fear of a coup tends to frighten and paralyze people who might otherwise be sympathetic to leftist reform. But anyone who is aware of the undertaking of the American State to protect the industrialists and landlords of the world (and perhaps of Outer Space) knows that the government of the Greek colonels just next door could be ominous for Italy. In 1964 there was serious talk in some quarters about the mechanics of a coup, and the power of the police in the Italian State would provide very favourable conditions for it. If it happens, let it be said again, it will not come from the unabashed neo-fascists of the MSI but from somewhere in the Democristian/Social-Democrat middle-of-the-road. And the police themselves will do the work that used to be done by the Fascist squads.

To anyone used to living under Anglo-Saxon law, the powers of the Italian police and the proceedings of the Italian judiciary are almost unbelievable in a country not formally totalitarian. For example, the suspects in the December 12 bombings were held totally *incommunicado* for a month, and Valpredo's lawyer has not yet been permitted to speak to him. The prevailing system is one of denunciation-and-confession. That is, if someone, let us say an informer, accuses someone of committing a crime, maybe of planting a bomb or kicking a policeman, then, unless the accused can produce a fool-proof alibi, he can be held in jail almost indefinitely—40 days without seeing a lawyer, two years without trial, if the magistrate desires—and interrogated incessantly in the expectation



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**LETTER**

**Correction**

Dear Comrades,  
In last week's issue of FREEDOM you gave the new address of the SWF as N.16. It is in fact Syndicalist Workers' Federation, 18 Scoresdale, 13 Beulah Hill, London, S.E.19.

Readers who have written to us at N.16 please note.

Yours fraternally,  
DAVID PICKETT,  
Secretary,  
Provisional Committee.

that sooner or later he will confess. Somehow this does not seem to work very effectively against the Mafia in the south, but just now a group of Carabinieri has been brought to trial for extorting false confessions from a group of workers whom they accused of committing a series of robberies. It is a matter of public astonishment if the

# Resistance in Spain

This is the text of a lecture read by John Rety on behalf of Miguel Garcia Garcia at Freedom Hall on Sunday, February 15. The comrade, who was released last October from a Spanish prison, contracted a throat ailment from a heart attack suffered whilst imprisoned. Lack of medical attention aggravated his condition and he is unable to speak above a whisper.

**THE FIRST WAVE** of resistance to Franco came after his victory. In reality nobody in Spain ever accepted the victory of the fascist movement except by way of military conquest. After the civil war thousands of Spaniards went into prison, or into exile, or were shot. The Army built monuments to its victory. It made no attempt to win over the defeated Spanish people because it recognised that they still hated the fascist regime. This is why General Franco did not try to re-establish the monarchy for 30 years and continued merely as a military dictator.

My own case is not exceptional. I was three years fighting against Franco and four years of Resistance on the run from the police and with the resistance groups, then 22 years in prison.

No international laws protected the Spanish prisoners, nor were there any laws to protect the people from Franco's conquest.

For instance, merely to try to get an increase in wages at work is an offence and in fact 60% of political prisoners today—even 30 years after the defeat—are solely in for attempting to augment their pay. This is a crime in Spain so far as the workers are concerned and there is no pretence at it being other than a class war.

The International Labour Commission visited Spain and reported on conditions of work, and on returning to Geneva was compelled to admit that the only

way to get an increase in the living standards of Spain was to grant an amnesty to political prisoners at least for those crimes that were not an offence in other countries.

In fact the Spanish Press published this report which in theory was accepted by the Government, but nothing whatever has been done. The various times that prisoners now spend in jail range from 3 to 12 years. It is nowadays exceptional to serve 20 years except for armed resistance. There is one further fact: there is no automatic release after sentence has been served and all prisoners, political or not, must wait for an act of so-called clemency.

Franco has said that it would be a sign of weakness to grant an amnesty. There has been a hunger strike many times, the last in Burgos on November 4 where 31 prisoners were protesting against prison conditions.

Last week, 15 prisoners escaped from Basauri, the new prison in Bilbao, and it should be mentioned that the new Basque nationalist movement, ETA, has become very strong. Those who escaped were five ordinary prisoners and ten politicals including four priests.

They succeeded in crossing the border and arrived in France. One of the priests pointed out that the category of political prisoners is not to differentiate from ordinary prisoners except to give them worse treatment.

Inside the prisons the politicals are kept in the same prison block, Falangists who have dissented along with Anarchists and Maoists for instance. But the prisoners are divided into A, B and C according to the degree of trouble they give the authorities, so that the younger and more rebellious will be in A, those less so in B, and so on. For this reason people of similar beliefs keep closer to one another. The Moscow

and Peking-line Communists, the Trotskyists, the Anarchists, all form their own factions inside prison, but even in prison one must organise and speak clandestinely, because attacks on the regime can be punished. Only one letter is allowed each week to close relatives. We have of course smuggled letters out.

Medical treatment in prison varies, and in Segovia it is so bad that prisoners have died from neglect. Soria is a mediaeval fortress and built for people of a different physique than modern men. The governor has in fact been sued for allowing these prisoners to die of neglect but it is absurd to suppose he would be punished. In fact, hospitals are often closed as a punishment to the prison in general, or sometimes treatment is refused as an individual punishment.

When the Basques entered France this year and sought political refuge, they were allowed to stay but on condition that they divided, so that two went to one province, two to another, and so on, and they were forbidden to leave those departments to which they had been assigned. This is typical of the treatment consistently meted out to those who escape from Franco, a type of planned humiliation which goes back to the period after 1939 when the French Government herded the refugees into cages and kept them cooped up there for a year until the Gestapo came along and sorted them out.

This is one of the reasons the prisoners of Spain need help, and we have been very obliged to the Anarchist Black Cross for assistance given. On the one hand the receipt of the parcels that have come in; and on the other hand, the work for release and the knowledge that once out, one may get away from restrictions, gives one great

encouragement. In the short time since its creation I received gifts from them and one likes to know too that it is prepared to help with our activities from outside. The feeling of solidarity it gives when one knows that others join in the work fraternally, because what counts to us too is that the work of resistance goes on. To know that one is not alone in one's suffering is a great thing in years of prison and also to know that the tools are available to go on with the job. This reassurance is what we need.

This work must be reinforced to help this young organisation with all possibilities available to each of us. We need the cash for the job—two pennies or two pounds, whatever can be given—we need the entire participation of all concerned for the Spanish struggle.

For what is important in the Spanish struggle is not only that it is a fight against dictatorship but also its possibilities for anarchist action and intervention. Spain is a battle-cry for us that can lead to action in other lands.

I have received so many kindnesses from the Black Cross that I am somewhat overwhelmed—not only during my imprisonment but since. However what is important is the active assistance that it is giving to those operating in Spain and even more what it can continue to give.

I went to prison for the activities of the Sabater Group in its militant direct action against the rulers of Spain. It is this type of activity, resistance not only to Franco but to all forms of future oppression, that we need for the future.

At this moment one main factor is that at Burgos there are prisoners, mostly from ETA, awaiting trial and sentence of death. Anarchist prisoners and others have declared a hunger strike in their defence. In cases such as this, international pressure can help. Success in saving them from the firing squad because of protests abroad has a far-reaching effect. I hope that in this particular instance all those present will give their most effective aid.

## Contact

Contact Column is for making contact. Use is free, but donations towards typesetting costs are welcome.

**Manchester Anti-Election Campaign.** Bill West, 16 Northern Grove, West Didsbury, Manchester 20. Meetings every Wednesday.

**Portsmouth Group.** Ken Bowbrick, 26 Habledon House, Landport, Portsmouth, Hants.

**Regional Conference.** Sunday, March 14, 1 p.m., Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York. Send material for agenda duplication as soon as possible. Details and map will be sent. Materials and enquiries to R. O. Atkins at the above address.

**Miguel Garcia Garcia** will speak at meetings and to groups. Expenses required. Contact S. Christie, 10 Gilbert Place, London, W.C.1.

**Tory Five Point Fascism Electioneering.** We must start our work now—preparation for printed leaflets and posters for a nationwide factory gate campaign—money and ideas needed—Interested? Contact L.S.F., c/o Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

**Definite date for 'Floodgates of Anarchy'**—now February 24.

**Port Talbot Group,** 18 Maesty Conol, Baglan, Port Talbot, Glam. Phone: Britton Ferry 2093.

**Toynbee Ethnic Drama and Variety Players.** Assistance wanted. A. Villa, c/o Freedom, Thursday.

**Angry Arts Films.** 'Troublemakers' US newsreel film. February 26 and 27, 8 p.m., Camden Studios, Camden Street, N.W.1. 5/- Enq. 263 0613.

**Anyone interested in contacting other comrades to discuss theory, practice, etc., through the post, please contact Eric S. Hetherington, Corbie Lynn, Llanwrtyd Wells, Breconshire.**

**'Facts on the National Front'** Pamphlet of information, price 1/- inc. postage from Freedom Bookshop.

**Syndicalist Workers Federation.** New address: 18 Scoresdale, 13 Beulah Hill, S.E.19.

**Anyone in Edinburgh** wishing anarchist activity please contact Tony Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh 11.

**Nottingham comrades.** We need help in your area (giving out pamphlets, etc.) with our campaign against chemical warfare and Nancekuke. Write for more details: Cornwall Anarchists, c/o 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne, Cornwall.

**Student doing research on British anarchist movement** would like to hear from anyone else who is doing, or has done, research on anarchism (any aspect, any country, any period), for possible exchange useful information and ideas. Please write to: Sam Wolf, Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge.

**Political Prisoners Tortured in Brazil.** Demonstrate. Brazil Film Season, National Film Theatre, South Bank. February: Friday 20, at 11 p.m. Sunday 22, 4, 6.15 and 8.30 p.m. Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25, 6.15 and 8.30 p.m. March: Wednesday 4, 6.15 and 8.30 p.m. Friday 6, 11 p.m. and Friday 13, 11 p.m.

**Wanted,** experienced cine camera operator to film documentary. Contact A. Villa, c/o Freedom, Thursday evenings.

**York Group Need Speakers.** Expenses and accommodation arranged. Write R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

**Every Tuesday Evening at Freedom Hall.** Informal discussion/entertainment/chess evenings. Small musical instruments and pocket chess sets welcomed. Refreshments. From 7 p.m. admission 2/-. Proceeds to Press Fund. All Welcome.

**Combat Academic Psychology.** Conference at Keele, February 28-March 1. Anti-Behaviourism; Psychology in the service of the late capitalist State; Examination of Alternatives: Body—Freudians (Brown, Reich, Marcuse), Phenomenological Approaches (Laing, Merleau-Ponty), "Humanistic" Psychology, Psychodelia, etc. Anyone willing to write a paper or anyone wanting details, please contact Keith Paton, 21 Victoria Street, Basford, Stoke-on-Trent.

**Urgent.** Help fold and dispatch FREEDOM every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.

**Malatesta Poster Screen Printed.** 7/6 (inc. post) from Freedom Bookshop.

**JOHN LAING & CO. LTD.,** one of the largest construction companies in the country, are building a much-needed new section at St. Thomas Hospital in London's borough of Lambeth. This £15m. contract, paid for from the public's purse, is at present at the ground work stage. The size and stage of the contract indicate that there will be a long period of work for men who are able to get a start (a job), for this is far from easy. Laings have, on the whole, been operating a 'black list' successfully.

This is a vicious practice operated by employers, who always deny it, which deprives men of work and is now being reinforced by rising unemployment. Their 'fine wire mesh' through which any trade unionist worth his salt had to pass was a hard and frustrating task, but one which was cheerfully accepted by militants as part and parcel of their calling and the system of exploitation by which we earned a living.

## SACKED

However, trade unionists (not just card holders) did get by Laing's 'black list' and organisation was starting to emerge from the chaos and bad conditions which is the lot of the average building worker. These small beginnings started among the carpenters, but Laings, sensing that their chances of maximum profits might be in jeopardy, came up with a cunning move. They decided to transfer a carpenter, whom they obviously thought was helping in the organisation of the site, to another job they had out at Isleworth, which incidentally is nearly wound up. The carpenter in question had been working on the St. Thomas's site for eight days, having got through the employer's six-day long-stop rule\* and was sacked after refusing the transfer.

This happened before Christmas and much to his credit the sacked man maintained a lone picket outside the site. Carpenters inside did operate a work-to-rule in support and the Laing site at the Barbican offered their support. Laings refused to abide by a decision made by the Regional Commission to reinstate the victimised carpenter. Then the management sacked all 36 carpenters employed by them on the site and said that they would be replaced by a sub-contractor, Whelan and Grant.

A strike committee leaflet says that 'This sub-contractor is already in dispute with the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, for alleged violations of the Working Rule Agreement, in particular

# STRIKE AGAINST 'THE LUMP'

concerning the operating of the self-employed practice, 'The Lump'. When this 'subby' tried to start on the site two weeks ago, the carpenters' picket line was reinforced by trade unionists from other sites. This assistance has continued and only a few carpenters are working for the 'subby'.

A great deal of support has come from ASW branches and district officials of the union. But such open violation by a company, whose chief, Kirby Laing, is also Chairman of the National Joint Council for the Building Industry, could not be overlooked and so the Executive Council of the ASW made the dispute official. Having done this, they have not so far made any further moves to get rid of the 'subby'. If anything they have hindered the removal because they asked the other unions not to withdraw their members in support. Unfortunately the one steward left on site is a 'Royal' and I'm afraid the rest are still working.

Laing's reasons for their actions were to nip the beginnings of site-union organisation in the bud. They did not want any narrowing of profit margins by organised labour and to protect these, they will break agreements just when it

suits them. This particular example occurred only a few days before the implementation of a new agreement signed by Kirby Laing himself, which, according to the *Financial Times*, has annoyed the ASW because with this 'new national agreement—designed to eliminate plus rates and help provide incentive schemes—Laing has, in the union's opinion, gone against the principles of the agreement and sub-contracted work to non-union people at plus rates without incentive payments'.

## FIRMS BREAK AGREEMENTS

Rather than be annoyed about the lack of incentive payments (who wouldn't prefer a good plus rate?), the ASW has done little to tackle employers who have been breaking agreements. Instead of stopping labour-only in the beginning, they let it grow to the monster it is today, relying on Government legislation, which is coming soon, to legitimise it. They will then organise these scallywags and give them union membership.

Firms all over the country break agreements left, right and centre. Tersons at Shepherds Bush even refused to start ticket-holders when they had a 100% trade union membership agreement with

the unions. It is not surprising that the average building worker is cynical about both the trade unions and the employers, but having once established the long uphill struggle for site organisation, these same men put up a fight second to none.

The Strike Committee, in their already quoted leaflet, call for resolutions to be put to the ASW executive for the extension of the dispute in order to bring about the end 'once and for all of labour-only sub-contracting on this site'. This mere exercise will not make the ASW extend this dispute, but the power to do this lies in the hands of the rank and file.

George Smith, the General Secretary of the ASW, and his Executive Council made this dispute official because of Laing's position in the industry and their blatant and cynical disregard of agreements. Perhaps they also thought that other sites might give their support and official sanction was the best way to forestall this. According to the *Financial Times*, Jack Rusca, London District Secretary, said 'he was trying to dissuade the Barbican workers from joining the dispute, which was made official on Wednesday by the ASW'. Let us hope that this is not the kiss of death.

Even with trade dispute benefit (£5 per week), these lads need financial support. Donations to M. Kilkeley, 187 Merton Road, London, S.W.19. P.T.

## ITALIAN LETTER

Continued from page 3

police are unable to locate, within a day or two, any known radical they wish to interrogate. Many of the relevant laws go back to Fascist times—including a crime of 'criminal association' under which, in principle, any member of a revolutionary group can be convicted; it is this charge that the police expect to make stick in the December 12 case if the bombing accusation fails. Meanwhile, as Robinson pointed out, the right-wing press (by which I mean: centre and right) convicts the accused on page 1; Feltrinelli is persistently connected by *Il Messaggero* and other papers with the investigation of the December 12 bombings even though the police have never said that this is what they want to 'talk' to Feltrinelli about—and in the circumstances, if one were Feltrinelli, one might, like him, prefer to remain somewhere abroad.

To return to our starting point, the problem epitomized by the '22nd of March' group has serious ramifications. The reason why the identity of the group is not clear is that, in addition to heavy police infiltration of revolutionary movements, the Fascist (or neo-Fascist) youth organizations have been playing a very peculiar and ambiguous role. It is

widely believed that certain neo-Fascist youth organizations were dissolved specifically so that their members could join and organize revolutionary student and youth groups by means of which to incite rioting and create confusion and discredit the genuine revolutionary organizations. If this is not so, then some individuals are playing double and triple games. Such games and manoeuvres are favoured by the fact that in Italy today young student rebels without a clear social consciousness may find in either anarchism or in a slightly disguised fascism (or both) something which answers to their individualistic anti-bourgeois anti-State anti-Establishment rebellion. The kind of hatred which the Italian bourgeoisie earns from the radical young is a hatred which (sometimes) only violent talk and violent action can appease.

In general, the Italian anarchist groups have taken a non-adventurist line. They have taken the line that their task is to develop worker-student solidarity and to foster a movement which can have an impact on the Italian scene. The pure revolutionary enthusiasm which produces violent adventurist talk is likely, given the distribution of forces, to favour either reaction or bureaucratic communism or American power, for these are the forces which could prevail in a

showdown today. Unfortunately, the rebellion of revolutionary despair and hatred is not always easy to distinguish from the perhaps romantic but nevertheless genuinely libertarian revolutionary enthusiasm which is the heritage of France '68.

Meanwhile, the Consumer Society develops apace, and the young people from the countryside go off to the cities to escape from the destiny of their peasant fathers and forefathers. The beautiful Italian countryside is depopulated—without even the bother of Enclosure Acts!—and the cities, already strangling on automobile traffic and exhaust fumes, swell toward megalopolitanism. No one suggests that it might be better to give the peasants a chance to live a better life on the land, by giving them the land and making it possible for them to get more than a small fraction of the market-price of their produce—for the Marxists do not like peasants on theory, the industrialists like a glutted labour market, and the big landlords are for the present pleased to turn the old agricultural lands into hunting reserves. The spirit of Ancient Rome, in its so many modern forms, is triumphant here as all over our globe.

Rome 22.1.70

D.W.